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EXAMINER

BRIER, JEFFERY A

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2628

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	02/28/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/973,622

Applicant(s)

BARNES ET AL.

Examiner

Jeffery A. Brier

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 January 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21, 23-44 and 48 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21, 23-44 and 48 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a). Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Detailed Action

Interview summary

1. On Friday December 8, 2006 Examiner Jeffery A. Brier and Douglas Scholer discussed applicants application and the rejections set forth in the office action mailed on 9/6/2006. It was agreed that the claims need to be amended to overcome the 35 USC 101 rejection. No agreement as to amendments that would overcome the 35 USC 103 rejection was reached.

Response to Amendment

2. The amendment filed on 1/8/2007 has been entered. The amendments to claims 1, 23, and 48 overcomes the 35 USC 112 first and second paragraph rejections and the 35 USC 101 rejections. However, the amendments do add 35 USC 112 issues which are addressed below.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant refers at page 10 last full paragraph to the personal interview as being held on December 7, 2006, however, the personal interview was held on Friday December, 8, 2006 at approximately 9:30 am. No interview summary was given to Mr. Scholer because Mr. Scholer did not want to have one generated at that point in time.

4. Applicants argument present in the paragraph spanning pages 10 and 11 are not persuasive because Barrot 2002/0046046 is a funeral planning process, see the title, abstract, and paragraphs 0002 and 0007-0024. Additionally the items discussed in

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Barrot may honor a decedent during a funeral ceremony depending upon the view of each person present at the funeral. It should be noted that claim 2 makes applicants superimposing similar to Barrot because both applicants' claim 2 and Barrot store image data of the composite image within a database.

Claim Objections

5. Claim 17 is objected to because of the following informalities: Claim 17 appears to incorrectly depend upon claim 24 since it refers to "the remote network server" which is first set forth in claim 25 not claim 24. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

6. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

7. Claims 1-21, 23-44, and 48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Independent claim 1 at lines 7-8, independent claim 23 at lines 13-14, and independent claim 48 at line 10 were amended to claim "is configured to honor a decedent during a funeral ceremony" which is unclear because each attendee of the funeral may have different impressions of the item, thus, how can it be configured to honor a decedent.

These claims were also amended to claim in the last lines "allowing selection of the correlated item for purchase based upon the overall impression of the composite image and as one of a plurality of component parts of the funeral plan". It is not clear how the method or program allows selection based upon the overall impression of the composite image as one of a plurality of component parts of the funeral plan.

Claim 23 at lines 20-22 and claim 48 at lines 17-19 claim "wherein the program facilitates funeral planning guidance to the user pertaining to the selection of the correlated item as it relates to compatibility with services and products of a funeral plan" which does not state how the program facilitates funeral planning guidance to the user. Claim 1 at lines 16-18 claim "providing funeral planning guidance to the user pertaining to the selection of the correlated item as it relates to compatibility with services and products of a funeral plan" which does not state how the funeral planning guidance is provided to the user.

Claims 17 and 44 are indefinite in view of the amendments to their parent claims because it is not clear how an Urn honors the decedent and similarly it is not clear which item are "some combination, thereof" that will fulfill the amended claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

9. Claims 1-21, 23-44, and 48 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Barrot et al., U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/00464046, and Lee, U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0102199, and the article describing the Rocky Mountain Monument & Vault's monument design software described in the article Funeral Home Online--Funeral Home Goes High Tech from the Utah Prime Time July 2000.

Barrot describes at page 4 paragraphs 0054-0057 and page 7 paragraphs 0081-084 a computer that is either standalone or networked to perform funeral advising and allows the user to select various funeral products for inclusion in the funeral and allows the user to view images of each of the funeral products.

Each of independent claims 1, 23, and 48 claim forming a composite image by superimposing the overlay image over the base image and the composite image includes a perspective view of the correlated item fastened to the funeral item; and displaying the composite image to a user.

Barrot replaces one web page image with another web page image as the user views the funeral products but it does not teach forming a composite image by superimposing the overlay image over the base image. See paragraphs 0082 and 0157.

However, it should be appreciated that figure 5a shows the same viewing room but with different funeral products, however, these web pages are complete files not requiring compositing by superimposing a base image with an overlay image by the local computer. However, it should be noted that HTML web pages are formed by

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HTML code that makes references to image files causing the system to composite the images into the web page seen on the computer screen. However, these commands may or may not overlay one image onto another image.

Therefore, Barrot does teach displaying an image to the user showing the selected products together in a composite image formed before the selection process and stored in a database of images.

Lee teaches a shopping system that allows the user to select items to be formed into a single product and using a compositing process, see paragraphs 0047-0049, to display to the user a perspective view of the product to be purchased. See figures 4-6. The selected items are considered to be permanently fastened together since the intent is for the pieces to stay together as one even though they were assembled together from pieces to form one unit. 05-1026 DOREL JUVENILE GROUP, INC., v. GRACO CHILDREN'S PRODUCTS, INC., CAFC November 7, 2005. Even though screws were used the intent was for the seat to remain as one unit. V-Formation Inc. v. Benetton Group SpA, 74 USPQ2d 1042 (CA FC 2005). DECIDED: March 15, 2005. The rivets of the accused device proved the intent of the accused device was to remain as an integral unit.

The Funeral Home Online--Funeral Home Goes High Tech article describes forming a composite image by overlaying a base image of a headstone with selected images of text, images, pictures, and just about anything, see paragraph 17.

The Rocky Mountain Article teaches the user can input his favorite image into the computer or choose from thousands of images which teaches the user is selecting

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visually appealing images. The Barrot et al publication teaches the user may select visually an appealing physical adornment when the user selects a casket, rooms with physical adornments surrounding or on the casket, a Hand Brushing Process 378, an Interior Finishing Process 380, etc. Thus, the references teach or suggest a user selecting a visually appealing physical adornments capable of being permanently fastened to a funeral item.

A detailed analysis of independent claims 1, 23, and 48 follows which is the same analysis made in the 09/06/2006 office action with the exception of addressing the added claim limitations.

Claim 1:

Barrot teaches a computer implemented method for guiding a funeral planning session, comprising:

displaying on a computer monitor (*display 15*) a base image of a funeral item (*Barrot displays many funeral items so the user may select a funeral item, many of the items such as caskets may be customized which allows the user to select another web page to view the images of a feature of the casket that may be selected for addition to the casket, thus, the initial view of a casket such as shown in figure 4d is a base image*);

superimposing an overlay image of a correlated item over the base image in response to a user selecting the correlated item (*when the user selects an area such as 77 in figure 4d the web page showing the image of that item replaces the web page shown in figure 4d*),

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in such a manner as to form a composite image (*Barrot does not teach forming a composite image. Lee teaches forming a composite image of selected items to be included into a product and Lee provides motivation to do this in paragraph 0047. The Rocky Mountain article teaches forming a composite image of selected text to be etched onto the headstone and suggest placing objects onto the headstone which would similarly be viewed by the compositing process.*)

wherein the correlated item comprises a physical capable of being permanently fastened to the funeral item (*Barrot teaches the user selects various physical objects capable of being permanently fastened to the casket.*) and

is configured to honor a decedent during a funeral ceremony, wherein the overlay image of the correlated item is one of a plurality of stored overlay images each associated with one of at plurality physical adornments, and each configure to form a composite image with the base image (*The items discussed in Barrot may honor a decedent during a funeral ceremony depending upon the view of each person present at the funeral. Each of the items 77 shown in figure 4d for example correspond to an overlay image.*), and

the composite image includes a perspective view of the correlated item fastened to the funeral item (*Barrot illustrates in figure 5a various viewing room views which is a perspective view of the viewing room. Lee teaches forming composite image having a perspective view when the selected items to be included into a product are composited into a single view as illustrated in figures 4-6 and Lee provides motivation to do this in paragraph 0047.*) so as to convey to the user an overall visual impression of how the

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correlated item looks when fastened to the funeral item to allow the user to make a decision as to whether to purchase the correlated item based on the overall visual impression (*Figure 4d conveys to the user an overall visual impression how the selected items looks when fastened to the funeral item.*);

providing funeral planning guidance to the user pertaining to the selection of the correlated item as it relates to compatibility with services and products of a funeral plan (*Figure 4d give visual planning guidance. The abstract and paragraphs 0002 and 0007-0024 discuss funeral planning guidance as it relates to compatibility with services and products of a funeral plan.*);

displaying the composite image to a user using the computer monitor (*All three of the references displays to the user a composite image of selected items to the user.*);
and

allowing selection of the correlated item for purchase based upon the overall impression of the composite image and as one of a plurality of components parts of the funeral plan (*The user may purchase the correlated item based upon his impression of the composite image such as the one shown in figure 4d.*).

Barrot does not teach at lines 4-6 of this claim *superimposing ... in such a manner as to form a composite image* and does not teach at lines 7-8 *the composite image includes a perspective view.*

The article describing headstone designing superimposes an overlay image onto the base image of the headstone.

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Lee teaches compositing separate graphic files to form a single image representing the items selected for inclusion into the single product. See paragraphs 0047 and 0063.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Barrot so the image of the selected item for inclusion with the funeral item will be composited onto the image of the funeral item so the user will be able to view a perspective image of the customized funeral item on a display or printout during the funeral planning because the article in paragraph 15 describes giving the customers a better way of viewing the items, in paragraph 16 describes giving the user a laser copy of what the headstone will look like and in paragraph 21 describes how this type of personalization helps in the healing process and because the Lee article states this is preferable to having every possible combination of user selectable options stored as separate files as is done by Barrot.

Claim 23:

Barrot teaches an apparatus, comprising:

a memory (*web pages are stored in memory, see paragraphs 0052-0055*);

a database resident in the memory (*the web pages are stored in a database, paragraph 0055 describes a SQL server which is a database server*),

the database storing images associated with a plurality of funeral products (*the web pages store image of funeral products*);

a computer monitor (*display 15*);

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a processor in communication with the memory (CPU 9); and

a program configured to access the database and retrieve a base image associated with one of the plurality of funeral items (*the web browser, a program, accesses the database to retrieve images of the funeral items*), and

display the base image (*the web browser displays the funeral item*), and

superimpose an overlay image of a correlated item of the plurality of funeral items over the base image (*when the user selects an area such as 77 in figure 4d the web page showing the image of that item replace the web page shown in figure 4d*),

in such a manner as to form a composite image (*Barrot does not teach forming a composite image. Lee teaches forming a composite image of selected items to be included into a product and Lee provides motivation to do this in paragraph 0047. The Rocky Mountain article teaches forming a composite image of selected text to be etched onto the headstone and suggest placing objects onto the headstone which would similarly be viewed by the compositing process.*)

wherein the correlated item comprises a physical adornment capable of being permanently fastened to the funeral item associated with the base image (*Barrot teaches the user selects various physical objects capable of being permanently fastened to the casket. It would be reasonable to expect the user would select at least one appealing physical object to be placed onto the casket and it would be reasonable to expect the user would select at least one visually appealing physical object.*) and

is configured to honor a decedent during a funeral ceremony, wherein the overlay image of the correlated item is one of a plurality of stored overlay images each associated with one of a plurality physical adornments, and each configure to form a composite image with the base image (*The items discussed in Barrot may honor a decedent during a funeral ceremony depending upon the view of each person present at the funeral. Each of the items 77 shown in figure 4d for example correspond to an overlay image.*), and

the composite image includes a perspective view of the correlated item fastened to the funeral item (Barrot illustrates in figure 5a various viewing room views which is a perspective view of the viewing room. *Lee teaches forming composite image having a perspective view when the selected items to be included into a product are composited into a single view as illustrated in figures 4-6 and Lee provides motivation to do this in paragraph 0047.*) so as to convey to the user an overall visual impression of how the correlated item looks when fastened to the funeral item to allow the user to make a decision as to whether to purchase the correlated item based on the overall visual impression (*Figure 4d conveys to the user an overall visual impression how the selected items looks when fastened to the funeral item.*),

wherein the program facilitates funeral planning guidance to the user pertaining to the selection of the correlated item as it relates to compatibility with services and products of a funeral plan (*Figure 4d give visual planning guidance. The abstract and paragraphs 0002 and 0007-0024 discuss funeral planning guidance as it relates to compatibility with services and products of a funeral plan.*),

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wherein the program is further configured to initiate the display on the computer monitor of the composite image to the user (*All three of the references displays to the user a composite image of selected items to the user via a program.*), and

wherein the program facilitates selection of the correlated item for purchase based upon the overall impression of the composite image and as one of a plurality of components parts of the funeral plan (*The user may purchase the correlated item based upon his impression of the composite image such as the one shown in figure 4d.*).

Barrot does not teach at lines 7-8 of this claim *superimpose ... in such a manner as to form a composite image* and does not teach at lines 10-11 *the composite image includes a perspective view.*

The article describing headstone designing superimposes an overlay image onto the base image of the headstone.

Lee teaches compositing separate graphic files to form a single image representing the items selected for inclusion into the single product. See paragraphs 0047 and 0063.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Barrot so the image of the selected item for inclusion with the funeral item will be composited onto the image of the funeral item so the user will be able to view a perspective image of the customized funeral item on a display or printout during the funeral planning because the article in paragraph 15 describes giving the customers a better way of viewing the items, in paragraph 16 describes giving the user a laser copy of what the headstone will look like and in paragraph 21 describes how this

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type of personalization helps in the healing process and because the Lee article states this is preferable to having every possible combination of user selectable options stored as separate files as is done by Barrot.

Claim 48:

This claim is a program product claim version of claim 23 and is rejected for the reasons given for claim 23, additionally, in one embodiment of Barrot's system the web browser on the local computer sends a request from the user to view a page to the network server, the network server, sends the requested web page, the local computer is directed by the sent web page to display the images associated with the web page. The memory storing the program is a signal bearing medium and the network is signal bearing medium during the transmission of the program.

Claim 49:

Barrot teaches the program product of claim 48, wherein the signal bearing medium includes at least one of a recordable medium (*the memory is a recordable medium since to have the program in memory the memory was recordable*) and a transmission medium (*the network is a transmission medium*).

Dependent claims 2-21 and 24-44 will now be analyzed.

Claims 2 and 24:

Barrot at least teaches storing the base image and the overlay image.

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Claim 3:

Barrot's web browser retrieves the image from the above described database, see claim 23.

Claim 4:

See figure 5a. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Barrot so the selected item for inclusion in the viewing room will be composited into the virtual viewing room so the user will be able to view the customized viewing room because the Utah Prime Times article in paragraph 15 describes giving the customers a better way of viewing the items, in paragraph 16 describes giving the user a laser copy of what the headstone will look like and in paragraph 21 describes how this type of personalization helps in the healing process.

Claims 5 and 26:

See paragraphs 0054 and 0063. Applicant claim does not tell where the local computer is located. Paragraph 0054 describes a stand-alone computer and paragraph 0063 describes a local drive. At least paragraph 0054 describes a local computer.

Claim 6:

During inventory updating the web page images may be updated by the server
Web browsers cache server downloaded images and when a new image is required by the web page it is downloaded from the server.

Claim 27:

During inventory updating the web page images may be updated by the server
This claim is broad.

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Claims 7 and 28:

As the use selects funeral items the selections are stored in the database.

Claims 8 and 29:

The web pages of the funeral items include image data, see figure 4d.

Claims 9 and 30:

The family advisor software provides services such as ceremonies and products such as caskets.

Claims 10 and 31:

Prices are displayed in the web page, see paragraph 0081, thus prices were entered into the database.

Claims 11 and 32:

Prices are displayed in the web page, see paragraph 0081, thus prices were retrieved into the database.

Claims 12 and 33:

Themes are discussed with regard to personal expressions feature of the software see paragraph 0084 and figure 5a. Themes links the user to related products.

Claims 13 and 34:

Various themes are listed in paragraph 0084 which at least some correspond to the claimed themes such as hobby and religion.

Claims 14-15 and 35-36:

See paragraph 0084.

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Claims 16 and 43:

See paragraph 0080.

Claims 17 and 44:

See paragraph 0072, 0081, 0082 and 0089 for examples of urn, casket, corners and panels.

Claims 18 and 39:

See claim 9 paragraph 0020.

Claims 19 and 40:

See claims 9 paragraphs 0049 and 0149.

Claims 20 and 41:

This is a broad claim and is met by many aspects of Barrot's family advisor software such as the page shown in figure 4b.

Claims 21 and 42:

See figure 4d which shows at least three areas of the casket which can be customized. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Barrot so the image of the selected item for inclusion with the funeral item will be composited onto the image of the funeral item so the user will be able to view the image of the customized funeral item on a display or printout during the funeral planning because the article in paragraph 15 describes giving the customers a better way of viewing the items, in paragraph 16 describes giving the user a laser copy of what the headstone will look like and in paragraph 21 describes how this type of personalization helps in the healing process.

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Claim 25:

See paragraph 0063

Claim 37:

The casket is associated with the base image for the reasons given in claim 23.

Claim 38:

The selected funeral item is associated with the overlay image for the reasons given in claim 23.

10. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

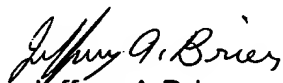
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jeffery A Brier whose telephone number is (571) 272-7656. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F from 7:00 to 3:30. If attempts to

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reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Razavi, can be reached at (571) 272-7664. The fax phone Number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Jeffery A Brier
Primary Examiner
Division 2628